



**MONTENEGRO
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**



**ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE
CHAIRMANSHIP OF MONTENEGRO
JUNE 2018-MAY 2019**

AII CHAIRMANSHIP OF MONTENEGRO 2018-2019

-PRIORITIES AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS-

Montenegro, as a Mediterranean and Adriatic country, considers Adriatic Sea and Ionian Sea as the greatest natural, economic and development resources. In that regard, we consider Adriatic-Ionian Initiative as a regional structure that is primarily focused on the best use of potentials and the promotion of the common values of the countries bordering the Adriatic and Ionian Seas. In its Chair capacity, Montenegro intends to continue with fostering good neighborly relations and regional cooperation, in order to accelerate development and growth through strengthened role of the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative (AII) and EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR). In that regard, AII is recognized as essential tool for fostering regional cooperation by completing the progressive alignment of common stances through the AII Round Tables, by further enhancing policy dialogue and cooperation among AII Participating Countries.

Montenegro will continue to strengthen ties between the AII Participating Countries which are also EU Member States, and the countries of the AII which are candidates or potential candidates for membership. Moreover, Montenegro will put special attention to the promotion of the European standards and values and, as a leading country in the process of EU accession, will continue to support the European integration aspirations of the Western Balkan countries.

Also, Montenegro will promote the strengthening of cooperation among the AII Participating Countries at all levels, in order to ensure the long-term stability, protection and promotion of the Adriatic and Ionian Basin.

The activities during one year period will be oriented towards development of the project-oriented dimension of the Initiative in areas of common interest on the regional level, especially in the blue growth sector, transport and energy connections, sustainable tourism and culture, environmental and civil protection as well as the inter-university cooperation.

Also, attention will be paid to further fostering dialogue with civil society through cooperation with the Adriatic-Ionian Fora (Cities, Chambers, Universities), as well as closer cooperation between the AII and important

regional mechanisms, in order to provide synergy and to define common objectives.

Among others, the priorities of our Chairmanship will be as follows:

AII priorities:

- **Tourism**, especially in the areas of sustainable and cultural tourism, taking into account that the tourism and travel sector are becoming an increasingly important factor of economic prosperity of Montenegro, Adriatic-Ionian region and Europe, as one of the most attractive touristic region.

Activities will be fully aligned with the guiding objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and incorporated into the principles of the Agenda for Sustainable Development by 2030 and national priorities that are in line with the main priorities of the Pillar 4 - diversification of the macro-region's tourism products and improving the quality and innovation of tourism offer and enhancing the sustainable and responsible tourism capacities.

- **Culture**, especially through ensuring the adequate valorisation of the cultural heritage, cultural and artistic creativity in the field of cultural tourism, considering the possibility of creating a common touristic offer of the entire Adriatic-Ionian region based on the cultural heritage in AII countries under the influence of the specific cultural-historical circumstances, such as a legacy of the past civilizations at AII countries areas, as well as on the cultural and artistic creativity.

- **Environment protection**, focus will be put on protection of the maritime area and a costal territory, especially in:

1. Integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP),
2. Integration of the concept of the climate change adaptation in the coastal area into the concept of the integrated coastal zone management
3. Improvement of the National plan for the emergency actions (Contingency plan) in the case of marine pollution by oil and other dangerous and harmful substances as well as the preparation of the Sub-regional contingency plan (for example for Adriatic sub-region),
4. Marine litter,
5. Enhancing introduction and implementation of the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Program (IMAP) of marine ecosystem in accordance with the principle of Barcelona Convention (Ecosystem approach within IMAP).

- **Blue Growth**, focus on promoting and deepening cooperation in areas:

1. Sustainable fishery,
2. Aqua culture,
3. Integral management of coastal area.

Presidency will be focused on developing the traditional coastal fishery and aquaculture in order to make more visible and concrete linkage with tourism. Also, we wish to promote and enhance touristic offer in the Adriatic-Ionian region by continuing fruitful discussion and explore the best modalities for its further development.

At the same time, our Presidency will be dedicated to the integral management of the coastal area with the focus on all pressures on the coast. The main aim will be to discuss modalities of making linkage between all mentioned activities and trying to avoid conflict between economic activities that are developing in this region and contributing to the development of the local community.

- **Research and Innovation**, with the aim of strengthening research and innovation capacities and connecting innovative ecosystems in the Adriatic and Ionian region.

We will put a special focus on identifying common strategic priorities, creating partnerships and pooling resources in the Region within a new approach based on strategies of smart specialization. Regional cooperation based on smart specialization will enable reforms in the identified priority areas, which will enhance economic growth and competitiveness of the Region. Also, it will positively affect the creation of new jobs and improve living standards.

During the presidency, we will encourage the activities that contribute to synergy of the AII Member States in terms of considering instruments to support investment in research, and with a particular focus on the synergy of existing financial instruments, such as EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation „Horizon 2020“, COST Programme, COSME and others.

Research infrastructure as one of the basis prerequisites for unifying scientific and innovative potentials and accelerating the dynamics of technological progress is also one of the priorities in this area.

- **Connectivity**, especially in the field of transport, with focus on developing the transport network between ports in the AII region, as well as the upgrading the Port infrastructure including the superstructure and port services which is of utmost importance for improving connections between our countries. Also, Presidency will focus on promotion of joint activities in the field of Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information System.

- **Civil protection**, through activities focused on prevention and timely reaction to natural disasters in order to provide sustainable

development of all Adriatic-Ionian region, environmental protection and welfare of the population.

- **Inter-university cooperation**, especially through one-year Presidency of Network of the Universities from the Adriatic-Ionian region (UNIADRION) starting from 1 June 2018.

As a Chair, University of Montenegro will focus on intensifying cooperation with partners in the preparation of project proposals preparation which will be submitted for financing from European programs. It is planned to achieve closer cooperation in this field with partner universities from the Adriatic and Ionian region. The special attention will be put on activities within the Interreg and ADRION Programs in the framework of priority areas defined by the Presidency.

In addition, in accordance with the Internationalization Strategy, the incentive will be given to the preparation of the project proposals for building the capacities within ERASMUS+ Programme and projects for mobility of students and professors, as well as the projects for mobility aimed at providing working practise in the foreign companies.

University of Montenegro will continue to make efforts in further developing strategic partnerships with the Universities from the AII region and finding the modalities for establishing the joint master studies with partner institutions.

- **Regional youth cooperation**, with an emphasis on the exchange of young people and the acquisition of additional knowledge and skills, through informing about the opportunities offered to them in the Adriatic and Ionian region. Presidency will be marked by the intensification of cooperation between youth in the Region, recognized as a driving force of society.

In line with the EU enlargement policy towards Western Balkans, in order to strengthen good neighborly relations, youth cooperation in the field of education, culture, youth policy and sports is in the focus of the Strategy for the Western Balkans. One of the mechanisms for improving these areas is further development of the Regional Office for Youth Cooperation, which will be in focus of our Presidency.

ACTIVITIES OF THE AII CHAIRMANSHIP

Montenegro will organize meeting of Council of AII Ministers of Foreign Affairs and three meetings of the Committee of AII Senior Officials (organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), AII Round tables on tourism and culture, environmental protection, blue growth, inter-university cooperation, transport and energy connections and civil protection, Ad hoc Round Tables about youth policy and anti-corruption, Conference on research and innovation (responsibility of the Government), as well as an event within parliamentary dimension of the AII (responsibility of the Parliament). It is planned to organize 15 activities.

Round Tables will be organized in the areas as follows:

1. Round Table on Tourism and Culture organized by Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism and Ministry of Culture

Topic: Sustainable tourism development and culture, having in mind the importance of culture for tourism experience and potential of cultural tourism for growth, the topic will be linked with the fact that this region is a key cultural tourism destination thanks to an incomparable cultural heritage. Special attention will be paid to the importance of sustainable management of cultural heritage.

Subtopics:

a) Creating the Strategy for revitalization of the abandoned buildings and sites of cultural value, especially fortifications, ensuring the sustainable management of cultural heritage and the development cultural tourism.

b) Archaeological parks as a modern approach to archaeological heritage in order to provide sustainable management of the archeological sites and improve access to this type of cultural heritage among visitors at regional and international level

2. Round Table on Environment Protection organized by the Ministry for Sustainable Development and Tourism

Topic: Quality of the environment

3. Round Table on Blue Growth organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

Topic: Development of the traditional costal fishery and aquaculture in order to make connection with tourism and enhancing touristic offer

4. Round Table on Inter-university cooperation organized by the University of Montenegro

Topic: Inter-university cooperation. The sessions will be dedicated to the following priority areas: tourism, culture, environmental protection and blue growth (these priorities will be in a line with the priorities of the UNIADRION Presidency)

The round table will be organized back to back with the Annual General Assembly of the Association.

5. Round Table on transport and energy connections organized by the Ministry of Transport and Maritime Affairs

Topic 1: Connection between ports

Topic 2: Upgrading the Port infrastructure/superstructure and port services

Topic 3: Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information System

6. Round Table on Civil Protection organized by the Ministry of Interior/General Directorate for Emergency situations

Topic: Civil protection in the AI region (strengthening the efficient common action to the natural disasters in order to provide sustainable development of all AI region, environmental protection and welfare of the population).

7. Ad hoc round table on youth cooperation organized by the Ministry of Sports

Topic: Modalities of informing young people about the opportunities, with the aim of strengthening their role in society. The focus will be placed on cooperation, getting and exchanging knowledge and skills, youth exchange and its activism in the Region, as well as strengthening role of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office.

8. Ad hoc Round Table on Anticorruption organized by the Agency for Prevention of Corruption

Topic: Preventive anti-corruption mechanisms/good practices and challenges with focus on integrity plans and control of political entities and election campaigns.

INDICATIVE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date	Venue	Event
2018		
October	Montenegro	1st CSO AII
16-18 October 2018	Split, Croatia	Forum of AII Chambers of Commerce, cities and universities (UniAdrion)
November	Montenegro	Round table on Blue Growth
2019		
February	Brussels	2nd CSO AII
March	Montenegro	Round table on tourism and culture
TBD	Montenegro	Round Table on transport and energy connections
TBD	Montenegro	Round Table on civil protection
TBD	Montenegro	Round Table on environmental protection
End of May	Montenegro	Round Table on Inter-university cooperation

TBD	Montenegro	Ad hoc Round table on Youth cooperation
TBD	Montenegro	Ad hoc Round Table on Anticorruption
April/May	Montenegro	Conference of Speakers of Parliaments
May	Montenegro	Conference on Research and Innovation within the EUSAIR Forum
May	Montenegro	3rd CSO AII
May	Montenegro	Council of AII Ministers of Foreign Affairs